

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-5, 7-9, 11-16, and 18-25 are pending in this application.

Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1, 2, and 4-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0204683 to Okumoto et al. (hereinafter "Okumoto") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,119,208 to White et al. (hereinafter "White"). Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Okumoto in view of White and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0120676 to Holavanahalli et al.

The drawings were objected to for having unlabeled boxes in Figure 3 and for including reference characters in Figures 6 and 7 that were not mentioned in the description. By the foregoing amendments to the drawings and specification, these items have been corrected.

The title of the invention was objected to for not being descriptive. The title of the invention has been amended to address this objection.

The abstract of the disclosure was objected to for not including the proper language and format. The abstract has been rewritten to address this objection.

By the foregoing amendments, Applicants have amended claims 1, 7, 9, and 23 to more distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention. Claim 14 has been amended to include the subject matter recited in claim 17. Claims 6, 10, and 17 have been canceled, and the dependencies of claims 11, 12, and 18 have been amended.

Okumoto discloses a method and system for permitting I/O data exchange between storage controllers. An I/O request is sent from a host device 20 to a storage controller 51 (paragraph 0018). The storage controller 51 manages several storage devices 56 (paragraph 0019). When evaluating the I/O request from the host 20, the storage controller determines whether the I/O request is for a storage device 56 that is managed by the storage controller 51. If the I/O “request is directed to a storage device 56 managed by another storage controller,” then “a path to the other storage controller is issued to the switching device 40” (paragraph 0023). If the I/O request is directed to a storage device 56 managed by the storage controller 51, then the request is passed to the storage device 56 (paragraphs 0032-0033).

White discloses a system and method for performing backup operations. As part of the backup operation, the meta data pertaining to a source device is copied to the destination device to complete the copy operation (column 2, lines 61-67 and column 6, lines 20-24). Once the meta data is copied, the destination (backup) device is fully accessible (column 6, lines 30-34).

The combination of Okumoto and White fails to disclose the present invention as recited in amended claim 1. The Examiner equates the switching device of Okumoto with the volume filter of claim 1 (item 10 of the Office Action, on page 5). Applicants respectfully disagree that there is any such equivalence.

The switching device of Okumoto is only used if the storage controller determines that the I/O request is directed to a storage device that is not managed by the storage controller (see paragraphs 0032-0033 of Okumoto). Thus, the switching device does not receive all I/O requests in the system. In contrast, the volume filter recited in claim 1 evaluates all I/O requests and directs the I/O requests to the appropriate meta-data extents.

The combination of Okumoto and White also fails to disclose the present invention as recited in amended claim 9. In addition to the reasons noted above in connection with claim 1, neither Okumoto nor White disclose or suggest creating additional I/O requests as recited in claim 9. Because Okumoto and White lack the creating and transmitting steps, claim 9 is clearly distinguishable over these references.

The combination of Okumoto and White also fails to disclose the present invention as recited in amended claim 14 for the same reasons noted above in connection with claim 1.

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Claim 23 as amended is distinguishable over Okumoto and White for the same reasons as noted above in connection with claim 1.

Because the independent claims (i.e., claims 1, 9, 14, and 23) are distinguishable over the cited references, the dependent claims (i.e., claims 2-5, 7, 8, 11-13, 15, 16, 18-22, 24, and 25) are also distinguishable over the cited references without the need for additional discussion.

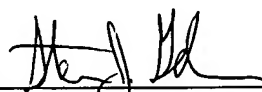
It is respectfully submitted that the amendments and remarks made herein place pending claims 1-5, 7-9, 11-16, and 18-25 in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this amendment as well as reconsideration and allowance of pending claims 1-5, 7-9, 11-16, and 18-25 are respectfully requested.

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If the Examiner does not believe that the claims are in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at 215-568-6400.

Respectfully submitted,

Chimitt et al.

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Enclosures (2)

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### **IN THE DRAWINGS**

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figure 3. This sheet, which includes Figure 3, replaces the original sheet including Figure 3.

The boxes 56<sub>1</sub> and 56<sub>n</sub> have been amended to include the label "Disk". This change is supported by paragraph 0025 of the specification.

Attachment: Replacement sheet